

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, further examination and reconsideration of the rejections in the Office Action of June 25, 2008 are respectfully requested.

Claims 13-16 and 27-32 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter contained therein. New claims 44-51 have been added.

In item 2 of the Office Action, claims 17-26 and 34-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsumoto et al. (EP 1083347) in view of Askeland in view of Kavesh (U.S. 4,536,536). The claims have been amended to further distinguish the present invention over the prior art. This rejection is inapplicable to amended claims 17-26 and 34-43, and inapplicable to new claims 44-51, for the reasons below, and the withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 17 recites a belt comprising a tape-shaped product having a tape of synthetic resin and stretched fibrous members of thermoplastic resin including oriented molecular chains *of the thermoplastic resin* oriented longitudinally along the stretched fibrous members. Claim 17 also recites that the thermoplastic resin and the synthetic resin comprise substantially identical resins. A belt as recited in claim 17 is not disclosed by the prior art of record.

For example, Matsumoto discloses a ball chain belt, but does not disclose that the stretched fibrous members include oriented molecular chains of the thermoplastic resin oriented longitudinally along the stretched fibrous member, or that the thermoplastic resin forming the stretched fibrous members and the synthetic resin forming the tape comprise substantially identical resins.

Askeland discloses that adding fibers oriented along a direction of a force applied to a matrix material results in an increase in tensile strength. However, claim 17 has been amended to clarify that it is molecular chains of the thermoplastic resin which are oriented. This is not disclosed in Askeland, or in any of the prior art of record.

For example, Kavesh discloses stretching a yet-unstretched fibrous member to obtain a greater tensile strength; however, Kavesh does not discuss the orientation in a thermoplastic resin of molecular chains of the thermoplastic resin.

So, the above-mentioned limitations are not disclosed in the prior art references applied in the Action. Further, they are not disclosed in any of the other prior art of record.

Additionally, in the present invention as recited in claim 13, the limitation that the thermoplastic resin forming the stretched fibrous members and the synthetic resin forming the tape comprise substantially identical resins, but with differing molecular chain states, produces unexpected results. This can be seen, for example, in a comparison between Example 11 and Example 12 in Table 2 on page 36 of the specification (summarized in part below).

	Filament Material (stretched)	Filament Strength (Mpa)	Tape Material	Tensile Strength (Mpa)
Example 11	PVDF	752	PVDF	383
Example 12	6/66 copolymer nylon	761	PVDF	311

Example 11 shows a stretched filament (i.e., stretched fibrous member) having a *lower* strength than the stretched filament in Example 12, yet when used to reinforce a tape in a belt according to the present invention, results in approximately a 23% *increase* in tensile strength of the belt of Example 11 as compared to the belt of Example 12.

Thus, no obvious interpretation of Matsumoto in view of the prior art of record would have resulted in the present invention as recited in claim 17. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 17 is allowable over the prior art of record, as are claims 18-26 and 34-51 depending therefrom.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is earnestly solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels that there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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